

# 7

## Amherst's Public Facilities & Services—Current Conditions

### Public Facilities & Services

#### Education & Schools

- 2 Elementary Schools
- 1 Middle Schools
- 1 High School
- Existing buildings are overcrowded and have several deficiencies
- Enrollments are projected to remain relatively stable

#### Public Safety

- New state of the art and more than adequate facilities for police, fire, and emergency medical services

#### Water & Septic

- Ample water supply—regionally important aquifer
- On-site wastewater disposal—no sewer system

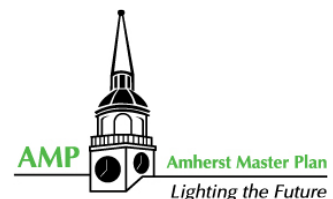
#### Other Facilities & Services

- DPW garage needs expansion and updating
- Limited cable TV coverage of community events
- Unique environmental and nature education center (Peabody Mills Environmental Center)
- Lack of community center
- Limited services for seniors
- Recreation Department primarily focused on athletics for youth
- Library needs more parking

#### What Does It Mean?

- Need for upgraded school buildings and additional space to alleviate overcrowding and meet program needs.
- Need for additional public meeting spaces.
- Lack of services and activities for seniors and teenagers.
- Limited recreational opportunities for seniors, adults, and teens.
- Lack of municipal sewer places constraints on development.

See draft section of Amherst's 2008 Master Plan Phase 1 report for additional details and sources.



**Draft for Discussion** March 2008

# 7

## Amherst's Public Facilities & Services—What We Want

### Voice of Amherst<sup>1</sup>

*"We need to support our excellent education and update our schools."*

*"Continue environmental efforts such as Joe English Preserve and PMEC.."*

*"Living in Amherst is expensive, once you add in the cost of housing and the additional cost of services not provided by the municipality."*

*"Services for seniors are insufficient in this town."*

*"We need a community center, especially for the elderly and teens."*

*"There is not enough for us teens to do."*

*"We need more activities, places to go, reasons to gather."*

*"There are not enough recreational facilities; needed for all ages."*

### Goals to Light the Future<sup>2</sup>

- **Increase the use town-owned buildings** to meet Town needs.
- **Improve** comprehensive, long-range **planning** to assure that public **expenditures** are phased in a cost-effective manner.
- **Ensure** that Amherst be developed in a **sustainable**, energy saving way with reduced impacts on global warming.
- **Provide educational facilities that support** the education of the town's **students**.

- **Provide services and facilities** for the town's **elder residents**.
- **Provide appropriate activities for teenagers** .
- **Provide infrastructure** and services to **support** the **desired** location and density of **development**.



<sup>1</sup> Resident input, based on various visioning exercises.

<sup>2</sup> Developed based on Steering Committee and resident input..

# 7

## Amherst's Public Facilities & Services—What We Can Do <sup>1</sup>

### To Increase Use of Town-owned Buildings

1. Explore re-use of the Brick School.
2. Determine best option for South Fire Station.
3. Develop additional parking for Library.

### To Improve Planning for Expenditures

1. Support the Capital Improvement Committee in efforts to update the Capital Improvement Plan.

### To Ensure a Sustainable Future

1. Formally pledge to reduce global warming and consider:
  - ◇ An anti-idling policy for town vehicles
  - ◇ Mandatory curb-side recycling
  - ◇ Forming a sustainability committee.
  - ◇ Training municipal staff in sustainability.
2. Implement green energy use in public buildings and vehicles.
  - ◇ Conduct energy audits of town buildings
  - ◇ Build future facilities with the goal of getting LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification.
  - ◇ Explore having municipal vehicles use bio-diesel fuel.
3. Develop public education on sustainable development and energy conservation.
4. Provide incentives to businesses and home-owners to implement energy saving measures.

### To Provide Educational Facilities That Support Students

1. Implement the School Master Plan to reduce overcrowding and upgrade school buildings
2. Develop interim measures that can be funded.

### To Provide Services and Facilities for Elderly

1. Explore regional relationships.
2. Facilitate cooperation between Parkhurst Place and Recreation Department.
3. Support the Granite State Organization Project (GSOP) in their efforts to identify senior needs and transportation options.

### To Provide Appropriate Activities for Teenagers

1. Explore after school use of school buildings.
2. Explore ways of providing transportation options to teens.
3. Consider a community center that would provide activities for teens
4. Explore expanded recreation programs

### To Provide Infrastructure to Support Desired Development

1. Consider impact fees as a means of paying for needed infrastructure.
2. Explore regional relationships.
3. Determine desirability of public sewer
4. Support DPW Road Surface Maintenance Plan

<sup>1</sup> Potential objectives and strategies for discussion.

